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ACTION EA-12

RELEASE AUTHORITY: CAHILLA, SENIOR REVIEWER  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
RELEASE DECISION: RELEASE IN FULL  
DATE: April 7, 2006

INFO    OCT-01   ADS-00   CIAE-00   DODE-00   PM-05   H-01   INR-10  
         L-03   NSAE-00   NSC-05   PA-01   SP-02   SS-15   ICA-11  
         TRSE-00   OMB-01   /067 W

-----084727    020328Z /63

P 020301Z FEB 80  
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4067  
INFO COMUSKOREA SEOUL KS//BJ-IS  
CHJUSMAG SEOUL KS  
SA CINCUNC KS

~~C O N F I D E N T I A L~~ SECTION 01 OF 02 SEOUL 01460

E.O. 12065:    GDS 1/31/86 (CLARK, WILLIAM) OR-P  
TAGS:    PINS, KS  
SUBJECT:    SOME MORE STRAWS IN THE WIND -- POLITICAL  
-            INFIGHTING BEGINS

1.    (~~C~~-- ENTIRE TEXT)

2.    SUMMARY:    SOME EVENTS OF THE WEEK REMIND US ONCE  
AGAIN OF THE DIFFICULTIES FACING THE PROCESS OF POLITICAL  
TRANSITION IN KOREA.    CERTAIN OPPOSITION LEADERS APPEAR  
TO BE CLOSE TO YIELDING TO THE TEMPTATION TO THROW OFF  
THE POSE OF MODERATION WHICH IS SO NECESSARY TO SUCCESSFUL  
PROGRESS TOWARD POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION BUT WHICH MAY BE  
COSTING THEM ADVANTAGE IN THE COMING CONTEST FOR POWER.  
EVEN THE DRP WAS NOT EXEMPT FROM SURPRISES:    THERE APPEARS  
A POSSIBILITY THAT PARK KEUN-HAE, THE FORMER PRESIDENT'S  
DAUGHTER, MAY SEEK ELECTION TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. THIS  
COULD STRAIN THE DRP'S UNITY.    END SUMMARY.

3.    WE REPORTED (SEPTEL) THE MEETING AND PRESS CONFERENCE  
ON JANUARY 30 OF NDP LEADER KIM YONG-SAM, DUP LEADER YANG  
IL-TONG, AND YUN PO-SUN AND KIM TAE-CHUNG OF THE NATIONAL  
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ALLIANCE.    THIS MEETING OF THE MAJOR OPPOSITION FIGURES IN  
AND OUT OF OFFICE HAD BEEN PUBLICIZED SEVERAL DAYS IN  
ADVANCE AND MANY EXPECTED IT TO PROVIDE CLUES TO THE  
STRATEGY OF THE OPPOSITION AS A WHOLE.    KIM YONG-SAM TOLD  
POLCOUNS THAT YUN PO-SUN AND KIM TAE-CHUNG CAME TO THE  
MEETING RESOLVED TO CALL FOR THE FORMATION OF A COMMITTEE  
OF ALL THE PERSONS WHO HAD RECEIVED LETTERS FROM THE NORTH  
IN THE DPRK'S RECENT PEACE OFFENSIVE SO THAT THE GROUP AS  
A WHOLE MIGHT WORK OUT A JOINT REPLY.    YUN AND KIM TAE-  
CHUNG ALSO PLANNED TO CALL FOR THE IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF  
PRESIDENTIAL ASSASSIN KIM CHAE-KYU.    KIM YONG-SAM SAID HE  
CONVINCED THEM TO BURY BOTH ISSUES FOR THE TIME BEING.    HE  
ARGUED THAT THEIR PROPOSAL FOR HANDLING THE DPRK PEACE  
INITIATIVE PLAYED INTO THE NORTH'S HANDS BY ALLOWING THE  
DPRK TO NOMINATE DE FACTO THE ROK SIDE FOR NEGOTIATIONS ON  
REUNIFICATION.    HE ALSO ADVISED THEM THAT GOING PUBLIC  
WITH AN APPEAL FOR KIM CHAE-KYU AT THIS TIME, A FEW WEEKS  
BEFORE THE STUDENTS RETURNED TO CAMPUS, COULD PRECIPITATE

A DANGEROUS DESTABILIZING SITUATION IN THE SPRING.  
POLCOUNS EXPRESSED VIEW THAT KIM YONG-SAM HAD PLAYED A  
STATESMANLIKE ROLE AND HAD PROPERLY GAUGED DIVISIVE IMPACT  
THESE PROPOSALS WOULD HAVE HAD.

4. WHILE KIM YONG-SAM'S VERSION OF HIS ROLE MAY BE SELF-SERVING, HIS DESCRIPTION OF VIEWS OF OTHER LEADERS BEFORE MEETING DOVETAILS WITH REPORTS WE RECEIVED FROM OTHER SOURCES. IT WAS ENCOURAGING THAT HE WAS ABLE TO PLAY A MODERATING ROLE IN THIS INSTANCE, BUT, AS COMPETITION FOR LEADERSHIP IN OPPOSITION GROWS, WE WONDER HOW LONG HE WILL BE ABLE TO MAINTAIN THIS TONE OR WHETHER HE TOO WILL YIELD TO TEMPTATION TO FURTHER HIS OWN AMBITIONS BY FLIRTING WITH ISSUES WHICH COULD SHAKE POLITICAL STABILITY AND PROSPECTS FOR FUTURE POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN A RATHER  
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PROFOUND WAY AND MUCH TO OUR DISADVANTAGE.

5. A DUP SOURCE PRIOR TO THE EVENT SAID THAT FOUR OTHER LEADERS AT MEETING WOULD INFORM KIM YONG-SAM THAT KIM TAE-CHUNG WAS TO BE THE OPPOSITION'S PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE AND THAT HE WOULD HAVE TO CONTENT HIMSELF WITH THE SECOND SPOT ON THE TICKET. IF KIM YONG-SAM REFUSED, THEN, ACCORDING TO THE SOURCE, THE OPPOSITION WOULD USE THE DUP AS THE VEHICLE FOR KIM TAE-CHUNG'S ELECTION. WE CAN EXPECT THAT THE DUP SOURCE'S VIEW OF THE PURPOSE OF THE MEETING WAS COLORED BY HIGH HOPES FOR HIS PARTY. THE PRESS CONFERENCE GAVE NO INDICATION THAT THIS MATTER WAS RAISED. HOWEVER, THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT THAT KIM YONG-SAM KNEW HE WAS SITTING WITH A GROUP WHICH DID NOT CONSIDER HIM THEIR TOP CHOICE FOR PRESIDENT.

6. THE DRP HAD ITS SHARE OF UNSETTLING NEWS. IN THIS CASE, A RASH OF AMBITION APPEARS TO HAVE STRUCK THE DAUGHTER OF THE ASSASSINATED PRESIDENT. ACCORDING TO A KNOWLEDGEABLE DRP ASSEMBLYMAN, PARK KEUN-HAE WISHES TO RUN IN THE NEXT ASSEMBLY ELECTION FROM THE DISTRICT WHICH INCLUDES HER LATE FATHER'S HOMETOWN. ALLEGEDLY, GENERAL CHUN DOO-HWAN, WHO BECAME CLOSE TO THE PRESIDENTIAL FAMILY WHEN HE SERVED AS PART OF THE BLUE HOUSE MILITARY DETACHMENT, IS URGING KEUN-HAE TO TAKE THE STEP. "CHUN DOO-HWAN IS ALL OVER THE PLACE," THE SOURCE COMMENTED SOURLY. (WE AGREE.) THE DRP LEADERSHIP REPORTEDLY FEARS THAT KEUN-HAE'S CANDIDACY WOULD MAKE THE PARK ERA A MAJOR CAMPAIGN ISSUE AND MIGHT WELL CAUSE SUCH INTRA-PARTY

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L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11  
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P 020301Z FEB 80  
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4068  
INFO COMUSKOREA SEOUL KS//BJ-IS  
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DISSENSION THAT A THIRD PARTY MIGHT BE FORMED. ACCORDING  
TO THE SOURCE, KIM JONG-PIL MAY TRY TO DISSUADE KEUN-HAE,  
BUT HIS CHANCES OF SUCCESS ARE SLIM.

7. THERE ARE SIGNS TOO THAT BUSINESSMEN ARE BEGINNING TO  
INVEST MORE CRUDELY AND AGGRESSIVELY IN POLITICS, AS AN  
INSURANCE FOR THEIR OWN FUTURES. SOME ARE ALREADY SUPPORT-  
ING INDIVIDUAL CANDIDATES OR ESTABLISHED PARTIES, BUT SOME  
ARE REPORTED TO BE WILLING TO SUPPORT A NEW PARTY. THE  
AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES WILL BRING POLITICAL CONTESTS  
TO A HIGHER PITCH OF INTENSITY. GLEYSTEN

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